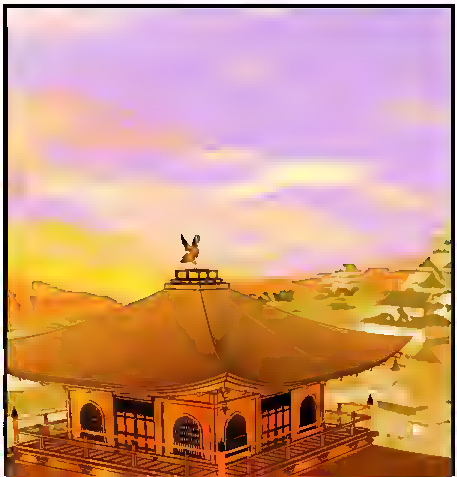
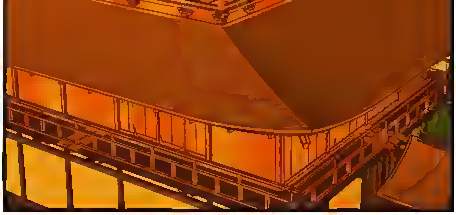
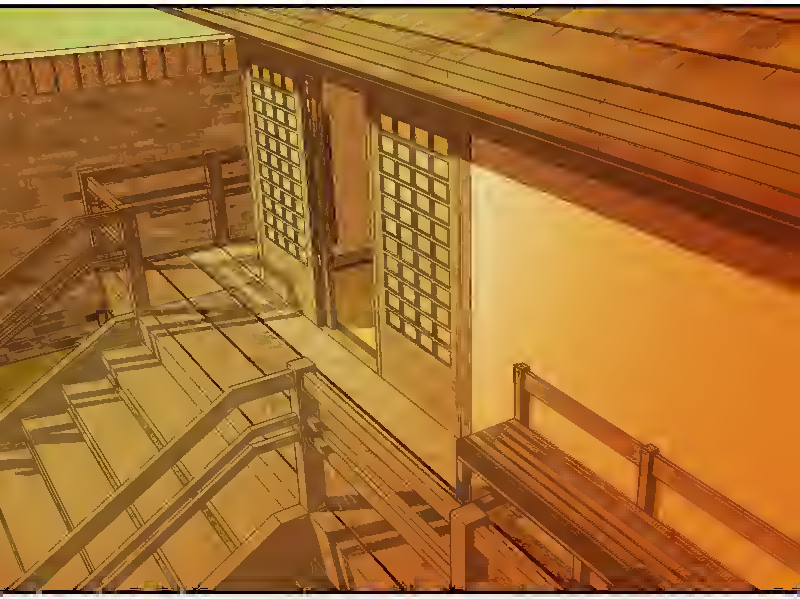
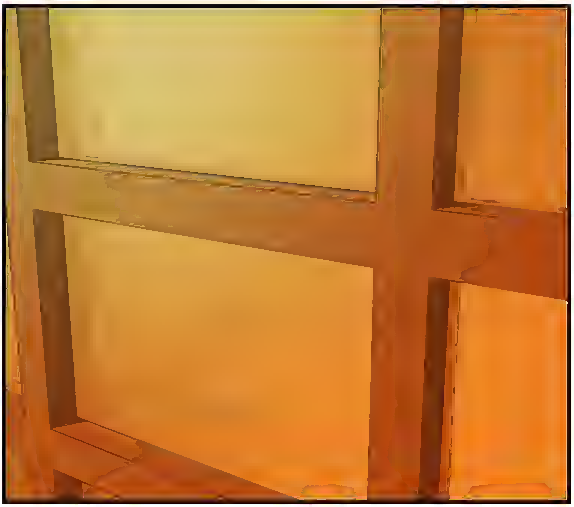
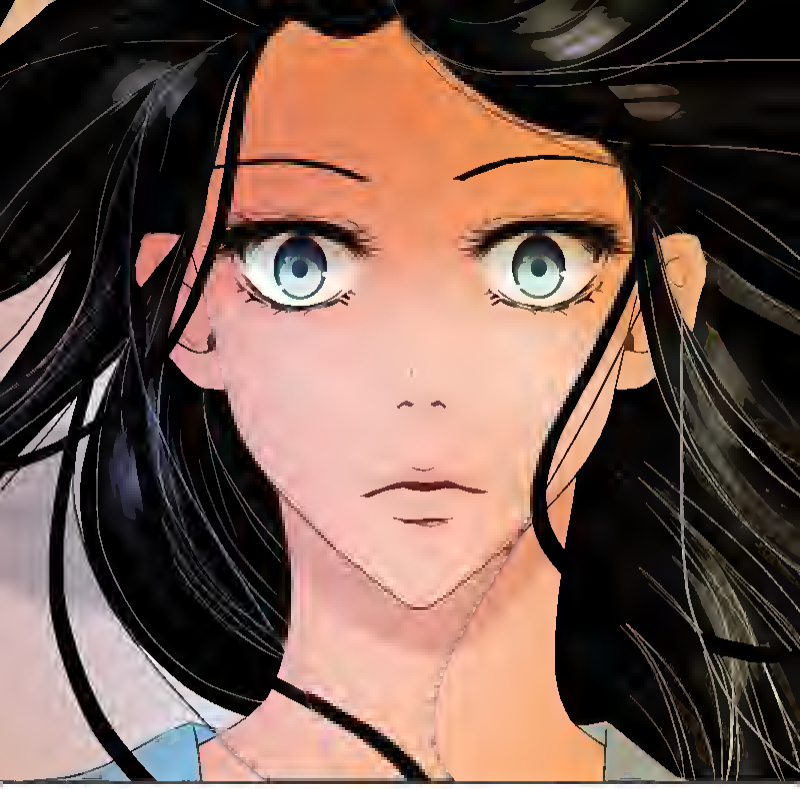


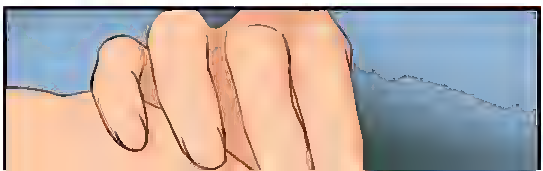




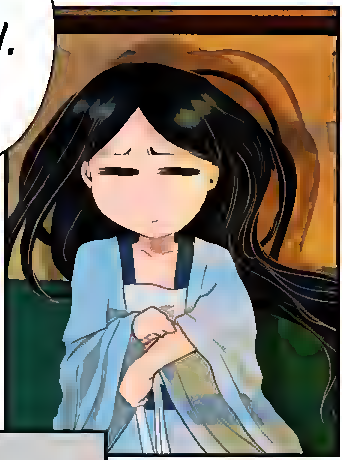




I SLEPT IN THE BLOOD KING'S PALACE LAST NIGHT.



OW.

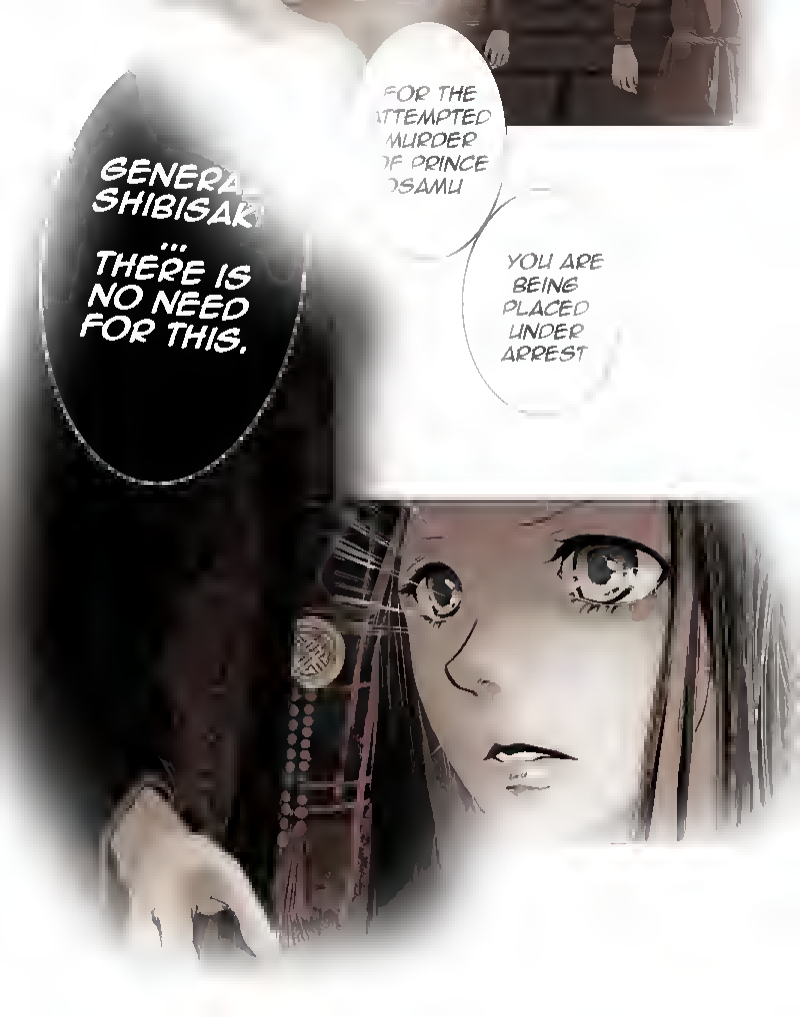


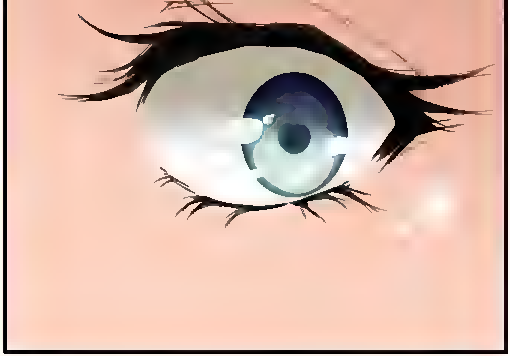
NOT A DREAM.
I'M NOT DREAMING.

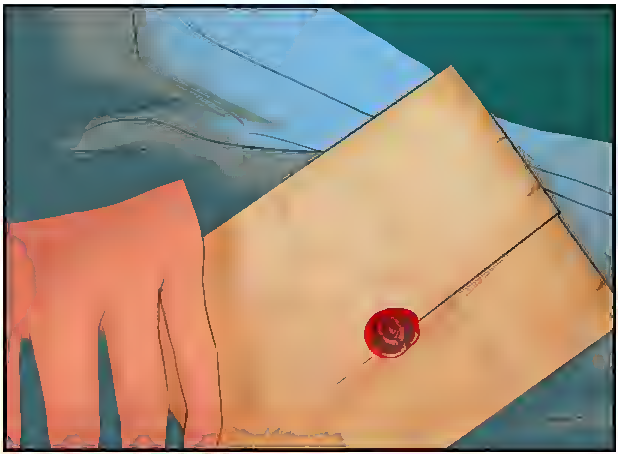
YESTERDAY REALLY
HAPPENED.

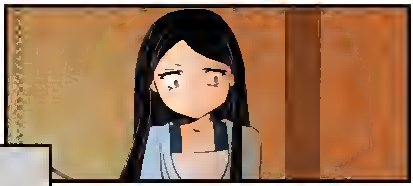
...KILLING HIM.
AND WELL

LET
GE
THIN
START
SHAL
WE.
ST...


FOR THE ATTEMPTED MURDER OF PRINCE OSAMU
YOU ARE BEING PLACED UNDER ARREST
GENERAL SHIBISAKI
...THERE IS NO NEED FOR THIS.

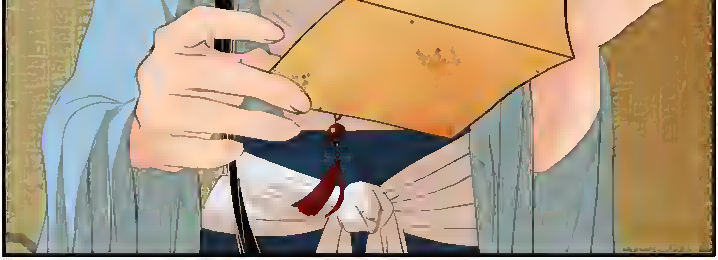


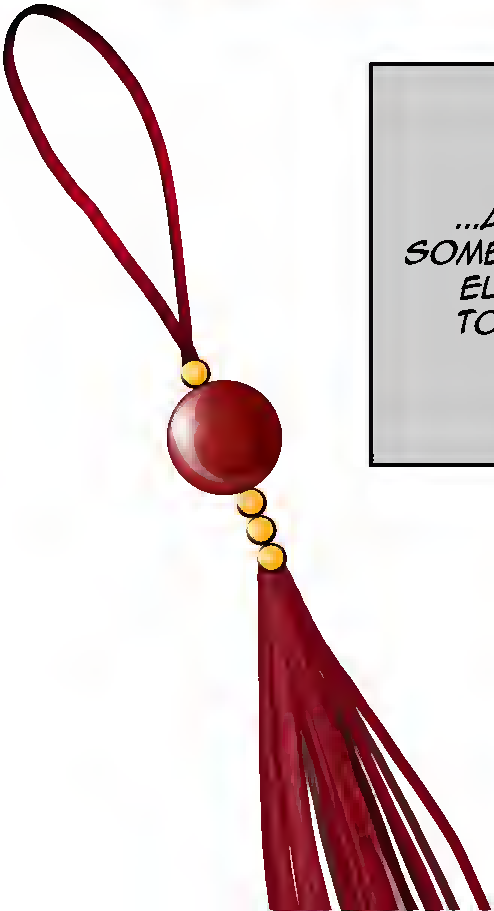




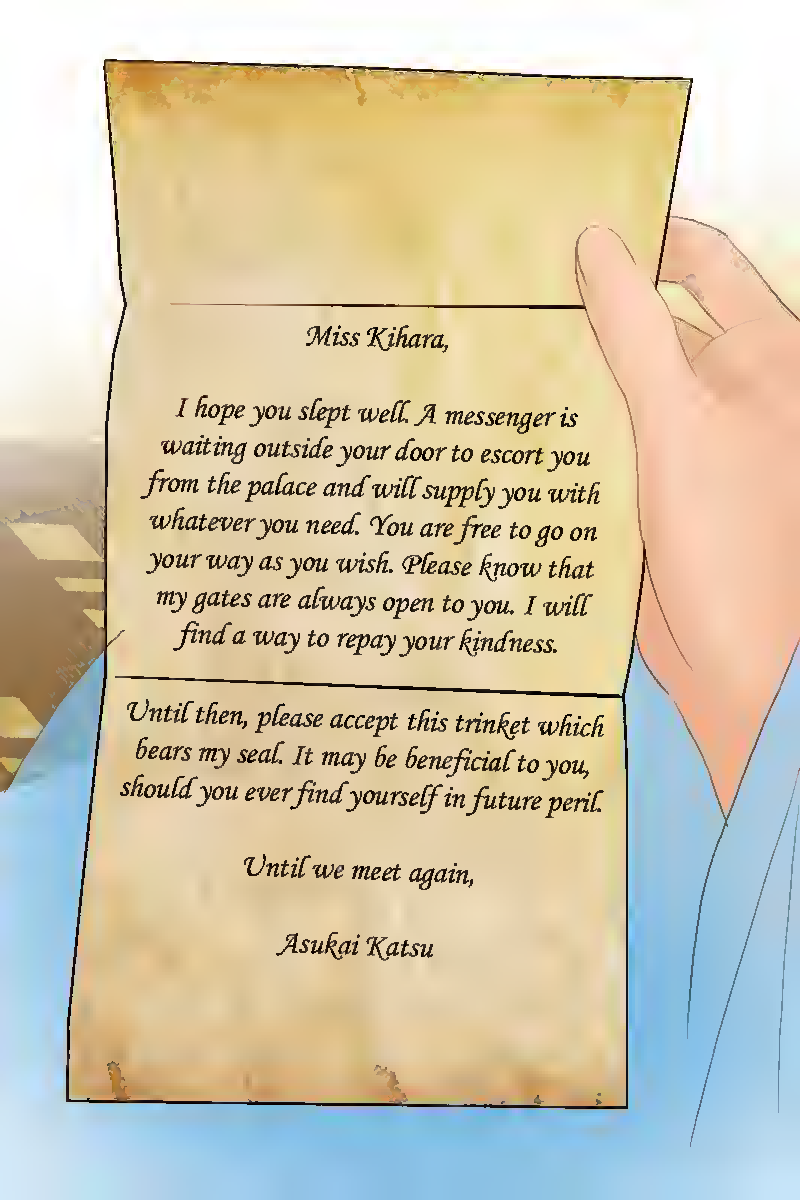
HM...
WHAT'S
THIS?

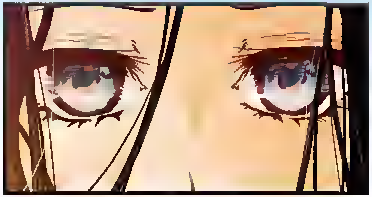
A LETTER?





...AND SOMETHING ELSE, TOO?


Miss Kihara,
I hope you slept well. A messenger is waiting outside your door to escort you from the palace and will supply you with whatever you need. You are free to go on your way as you wish. Please know that my gates are always open to you. I will find a way to repay your kindness.
Until then, please accept this trinket which bears my seal. It may be beneficial to you, should you ever find yourself in future peril.
Until we meet again,
Asukai Katsu

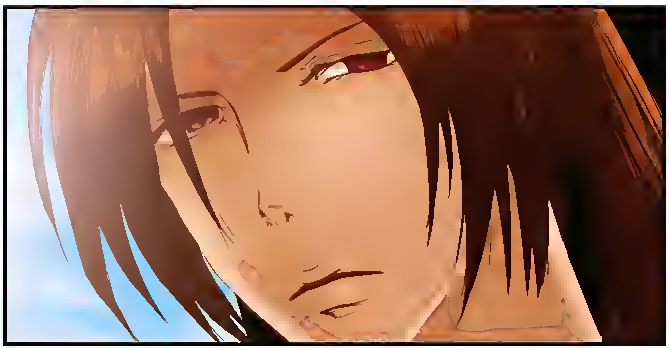


I RECIEVED A PERSONAL LETTER FROM THE KING...?

...I'M REALLY NOT DREAMING.

THANK YOU VERY MUCH, I KNOW MY WAY FROM HERE.
YOU'RE WELCOME. PLEASE TRAVEL SAFELY.

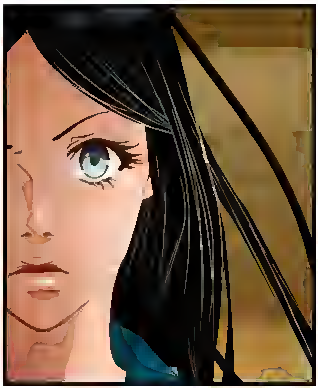
MISS KIHARA.
I WILL, THANK YOU.



...THE GENERAL?

I'LL BE WATCHING YOUR EVERY MOVE, PHYSICIAN.

YOU'VE BEEN WARNED.



I'VE BEEN WARNED?

WHAT IS THIS GUY'S PROBLEM WITH ME?

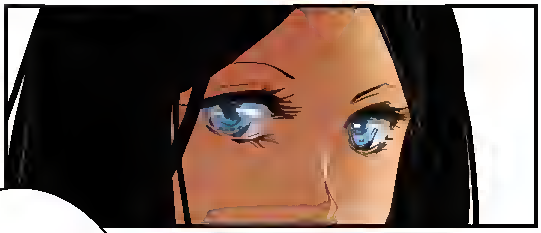
REGARDLESS OF WHAT HE THINKS OF ME, THE KING SEEMS TO FEEL OTHERWISE.

THE BLOOD KING...
HE ISN'T QUITE WHAT I EXPECTED HIM TO BE.

I DON'T KNOW WHAT TO DO IF HE COMES BACK...

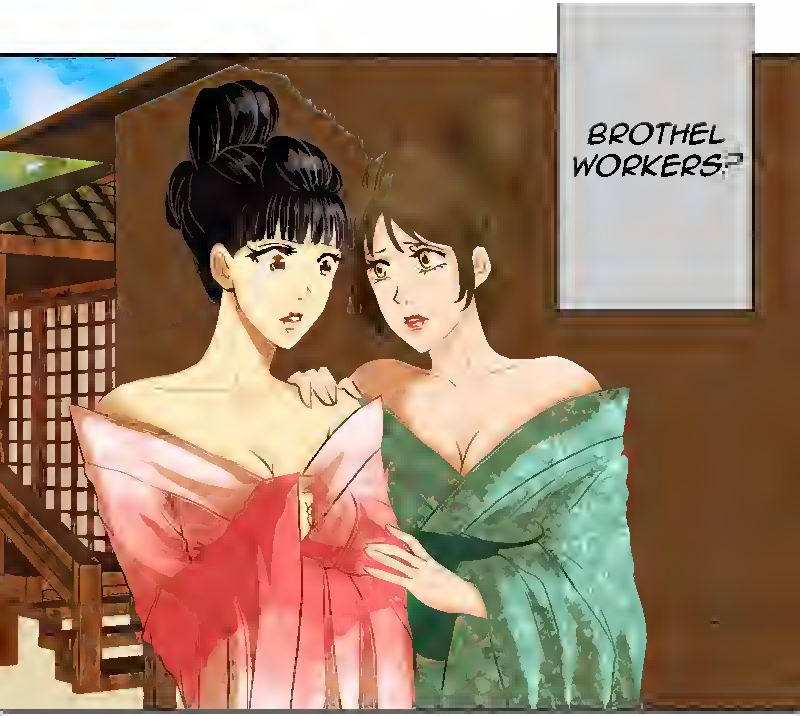
I KNOW, ASUKA, I'M SCARED TOO.

BUT, I DON'T KNOW WHAT WE CAN DO...



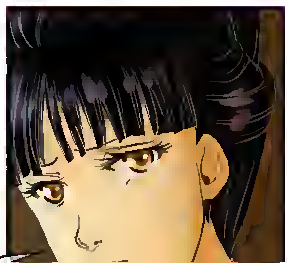
DO YOU KNOW WHAT HAPPENED TO THE LAST ONE HE WAS

ONE HE WAS WITH?

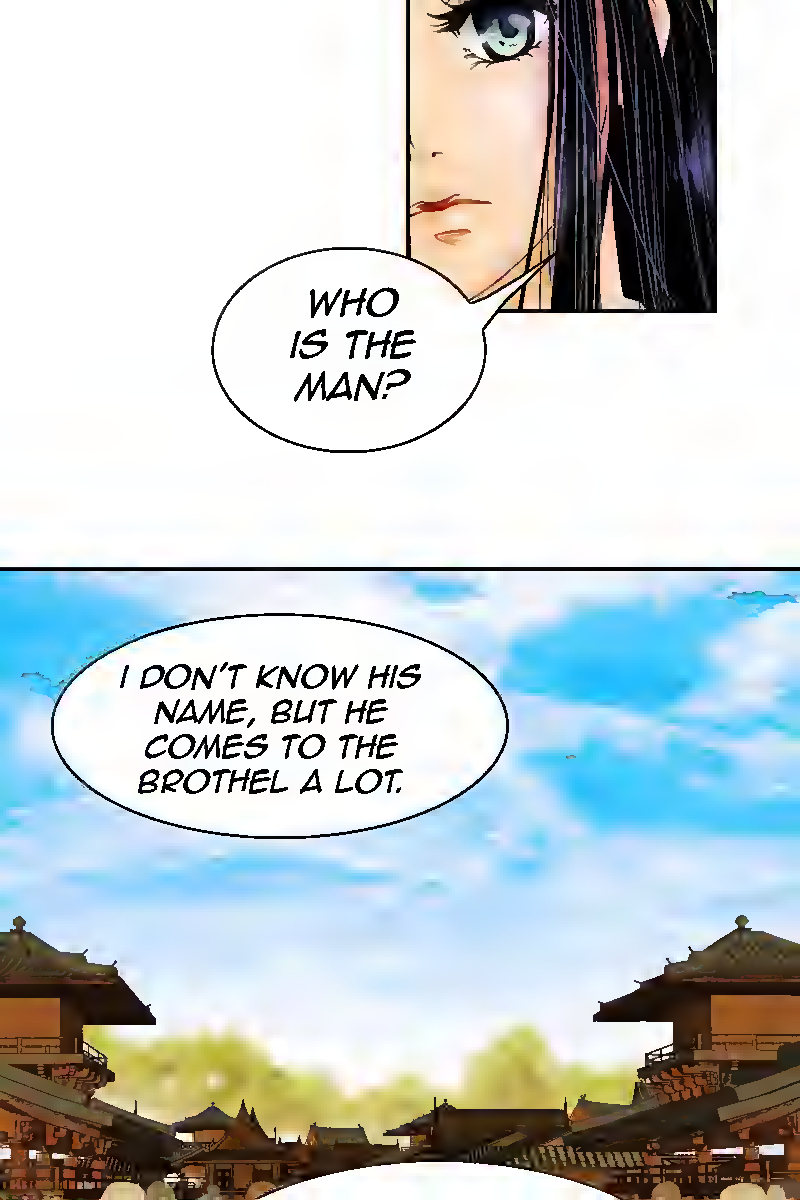

BROTHEL WORKERS?

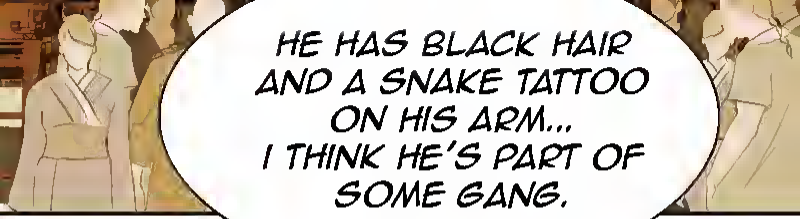
EXCUSE

ME,
IS
EVERY-
THING
ALRIGHT
?

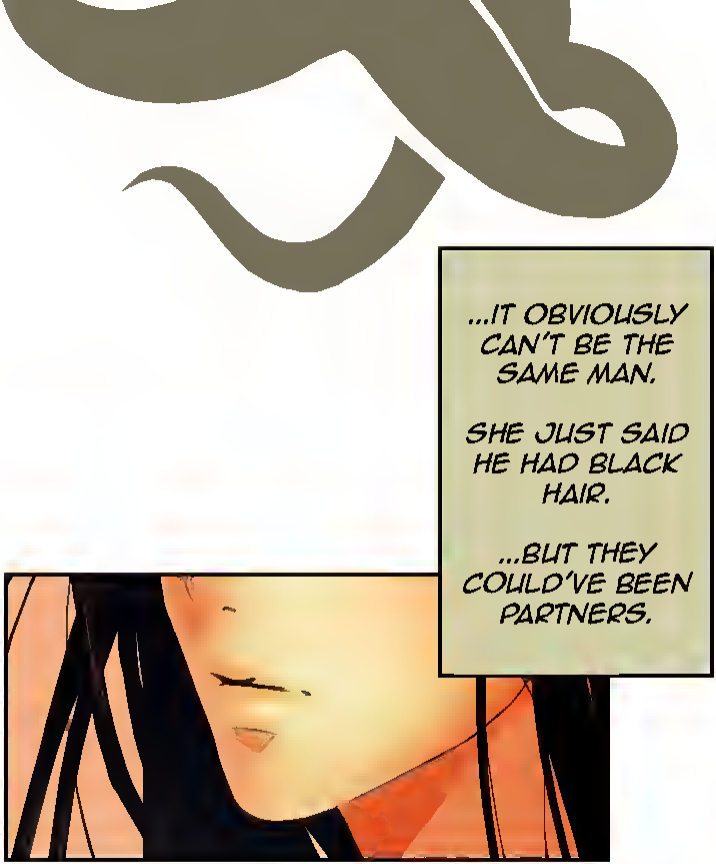


IT'S JUST... THERE'S THIS MAN THAT HAS BEEN VISITING THE BROTHEL RECENTLY...
AND... WELL...
HE PAYS EXTRA FOR THE GIRLS HERE AND THEN... THEY DISAPPEAR.
BUT, NO ONE IS DOING ANYTHING ABOUT IT. I DON'T KNOW WHAT TO DO ABOUT IT...


WHO IS THE MAN?
I DON'T KNOW HIS NAME, BUT HE COMES TO THE BROTHEL A LOT.

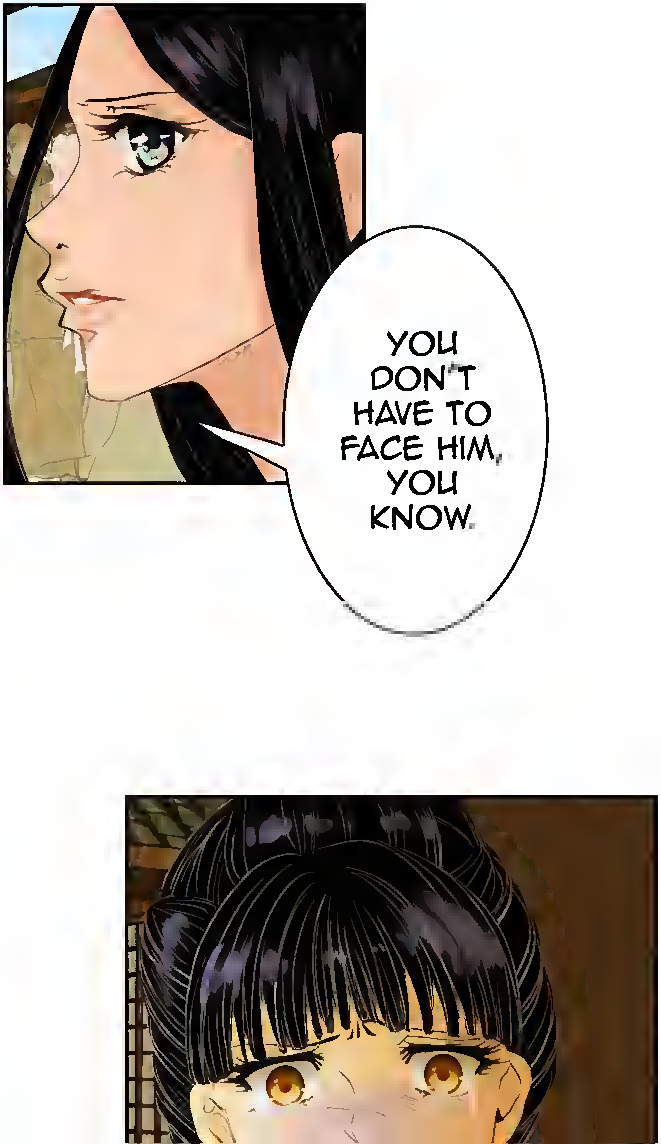

HE HAS BLACK HAIR
AND A SNAKE TATTOO
ON HIS ARM...
I THINK HE'S PART OF
SOME GANG.

A SNAKE TATTOO?

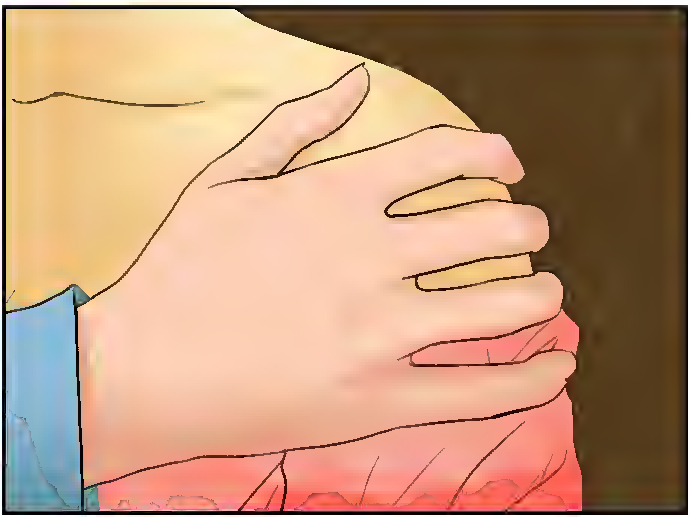

...IT OBVIOUSLY CAN'T BE THE SAME MAN.
SHE JUST SAID HE HAD BLACK HAIR.
...BUT THEY COULD'VE BEEN PARTNERS.

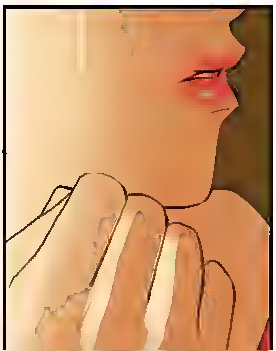
I CAN'T JUST SIT IDLY BY KNOWING THAT THIS GANG IS ALLOWED TO RUN RAMPANT, TAKING ADVANTAGE OF YOUNG WOMEN LIKE THIS...

HE SAID HE'S COMING BACK TO SEE ME TODAY...
I DON'T KNOW WHAT TO DO.


YOU DON'T HAVE TO FACE HIM, YOU KNOW.

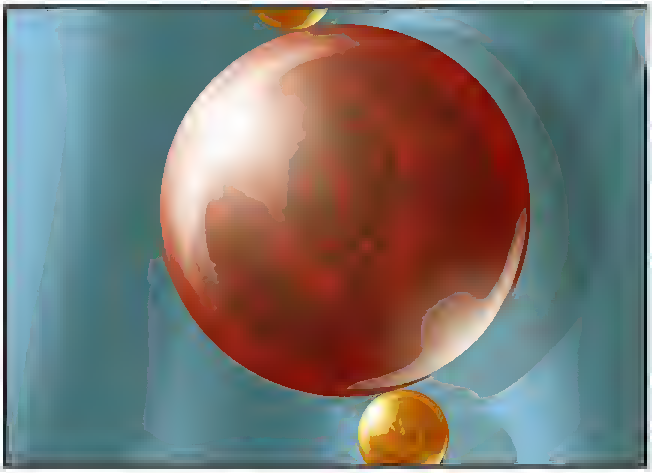
IT'S MY LIVELIHOOD, I CAN'T JUST- I CAN'T-
I HAVE NOWHERE ELSE TO GO AND I-



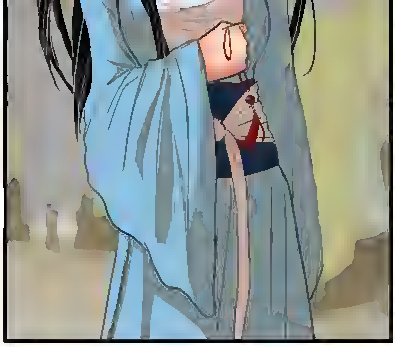


THEN LET ME DEAL WITH HIM. I'LL STOP THAT CRIMINAL SOMEHOW.
HE'LL NEVER TAKE ANOTHER GIRL AGAIN.

YOU CAN'T DO THAT. WE CAN'T RISK IT-
WAIT!
YOU HAVE THE BLOOD KING'S SEAL.



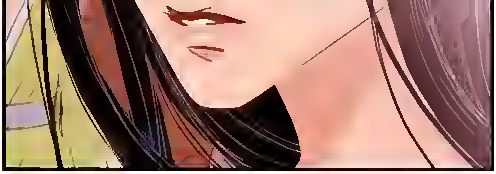
ARE YOU... AFFILIATED WITH HIS ARMY?!

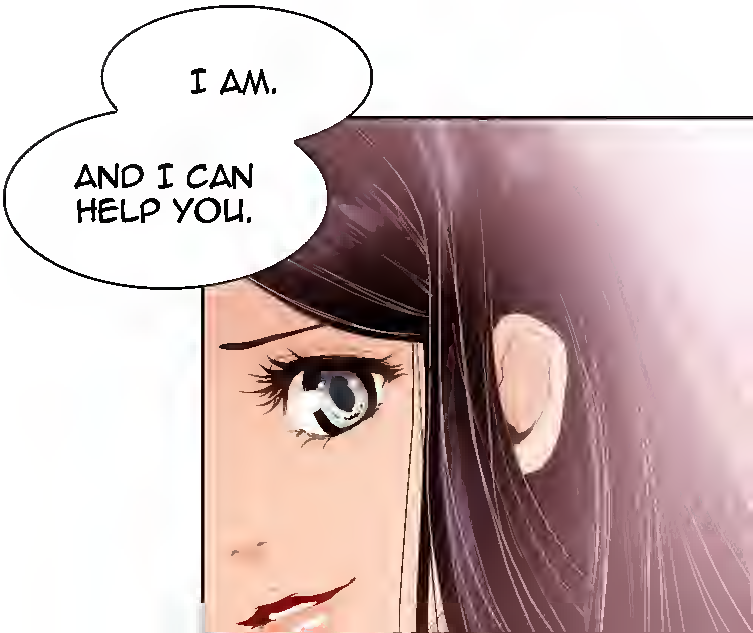


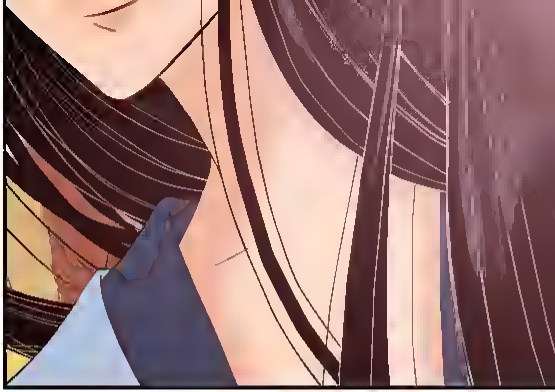
THEY THINK I'M ALLIED TO THE KING BECAUSE OF THIS TRINKET?

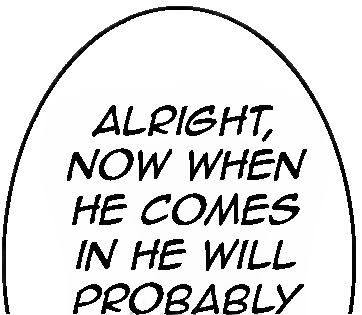
...THIS COULD BE USEFUL.

Y-YES.

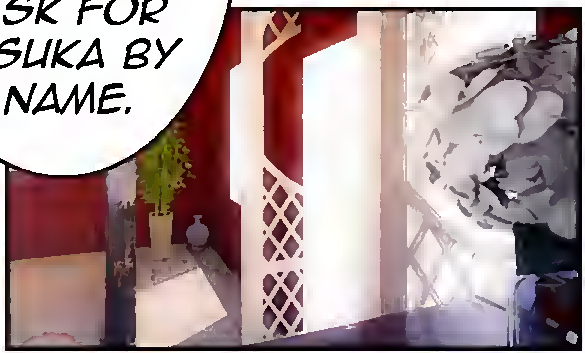



I AM.
AND I CAN HELP YOU.




ALRIGHT,
NOW WHEN
HE COMES
IN HE WILL
PROBABLY

ASK FOR ASUKA BY NAME.



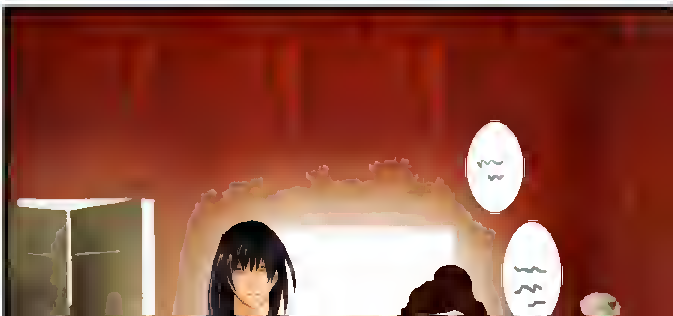
AND WHEN THE MADAME POINTS TO YOU, HOPEFULLY HE WILL CONSIDER YOU A FAIR ALTERNATIVE.

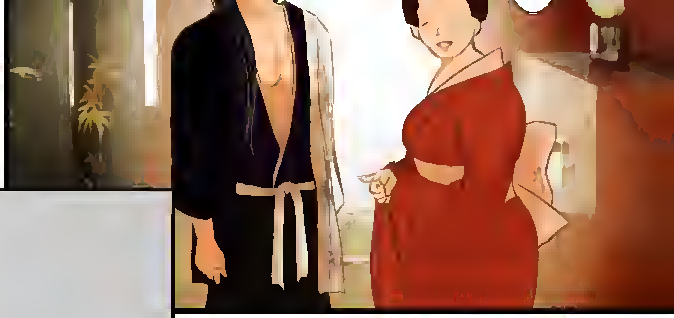
THEN YOU WILL HAVE YOUR CHANCE.
PLEASE BE CAREFUL, MISS KIHARA.
I WILL.

I HOPE I CAN HANDLE THIS... I KNOW I ALWAYS PUT MYSELF INTO SO MUCH

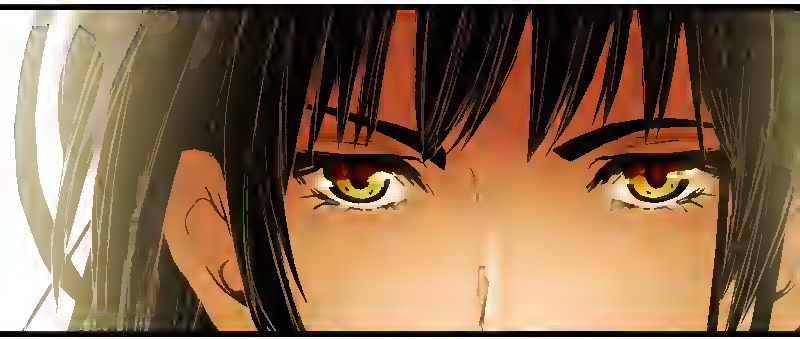
TROUBLE...

BUT I HATE TO SEE SOMEONE BEING TAKEN ADVANTAGE OF.





THE MADAME POINTED TO ME.

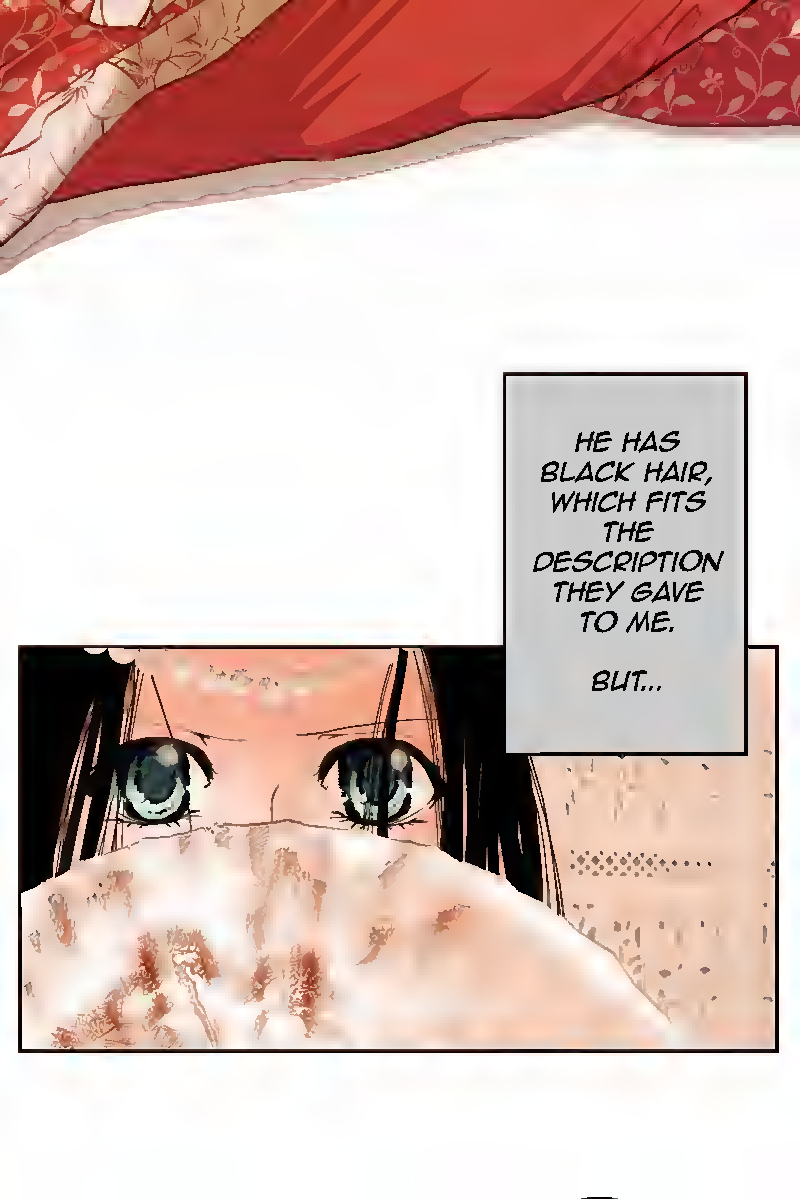


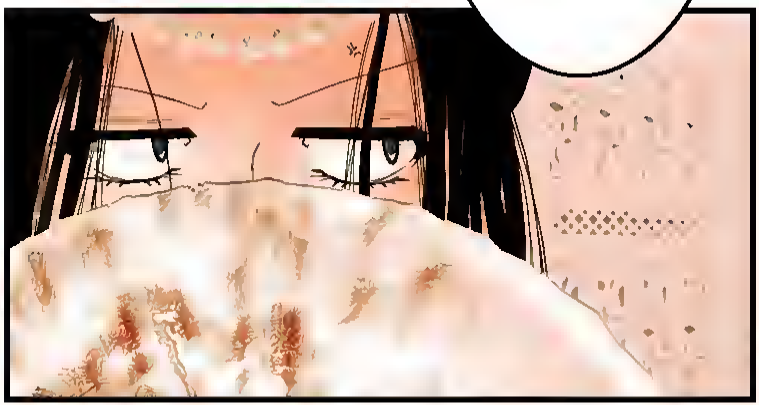
HE'S LOOKING RIGHT AT ME.

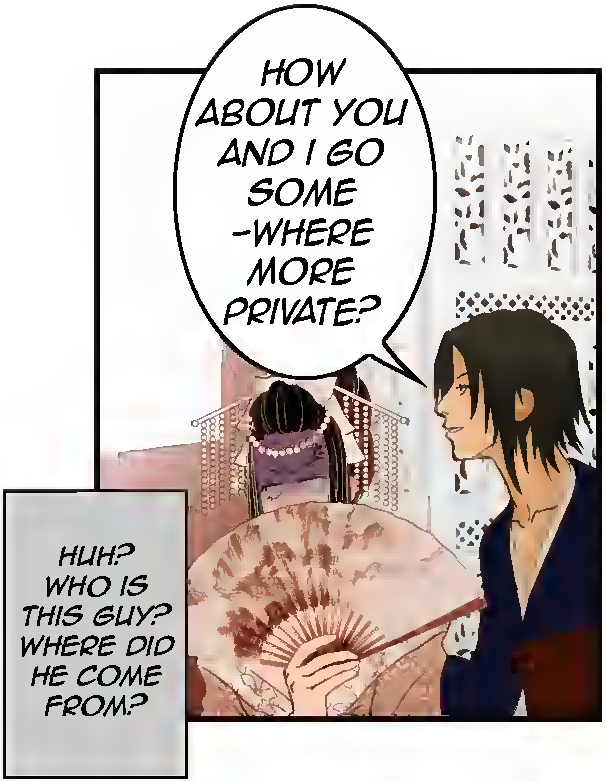
MUST BE A COINCIDENCE ...

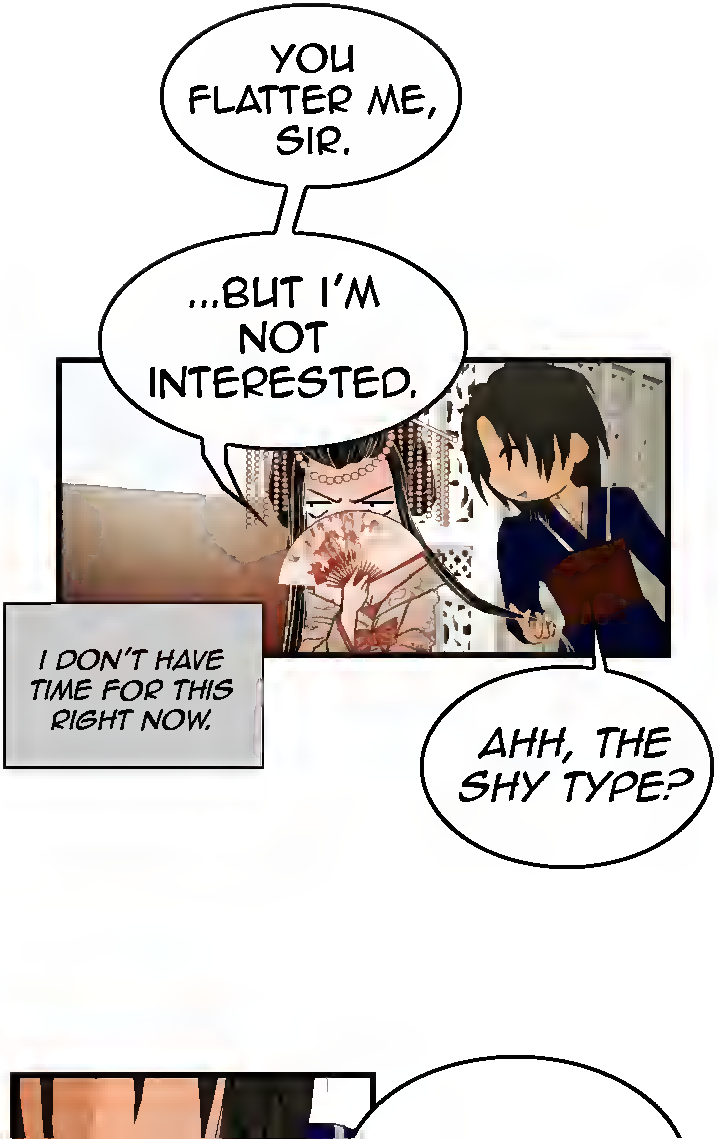
HE CAN'T POSSIBLY BE THE CRIMINAL, CAN HE?

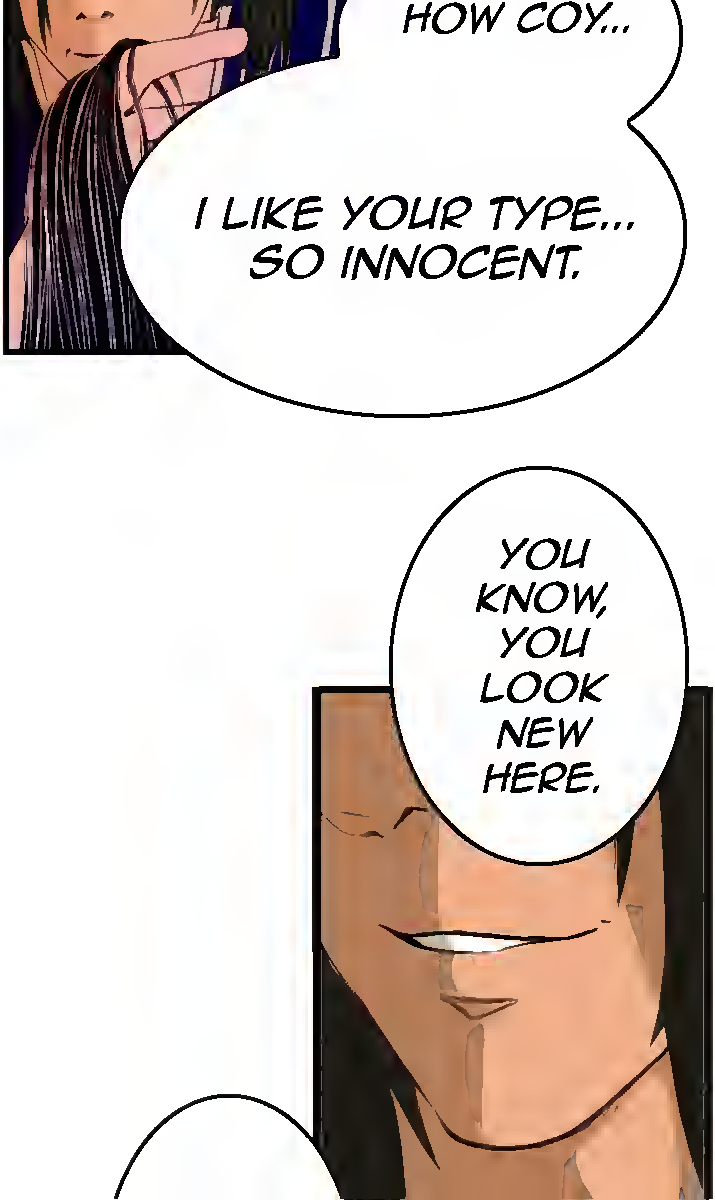
HE DOESN'T LOOK LIKE A CRIMINAL.


HE HAS BLACK HAIR, WHICH FITS THE DESCRIPTION THEY GAVE TO ME.
BUT...
.....


MY...
YOU ARE
QUITE THE
BEAUTIFUL
MAIDEN.


HOW ABOUT YOU AND I GO SOME -WHERE MORE PRIVATE?
HUH? WHO IS THIS GUY? WHERE DID HE COME FROM?


YOU FLATTER ME, SIR.
...BUT I'M NOT INTERESTED.
I DON'T HAVE TIME FOR THIS RIGHT NOW.
AHH, THE SHY TYPE?


HOW COY...
I LIKE YOUR TYPE... SO INNOCENT.
YOU KNOW, YOU LOOK NEW HERE.

AND SO YOUNG TOO.

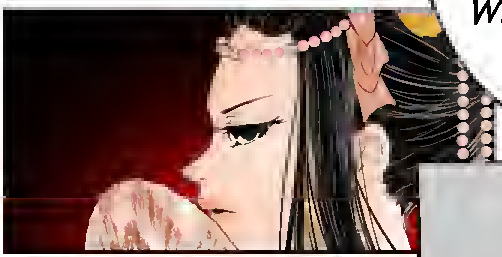
COULD IT BE...

...THAT YOU'VE NEVER **KNOWN** A MAN?

100% CORRECT

* CHUCKLE *

I'LL PAY YOU TRIPLE THE USUAL RATE IF YOU STAY THE NIGHT WITH ME.



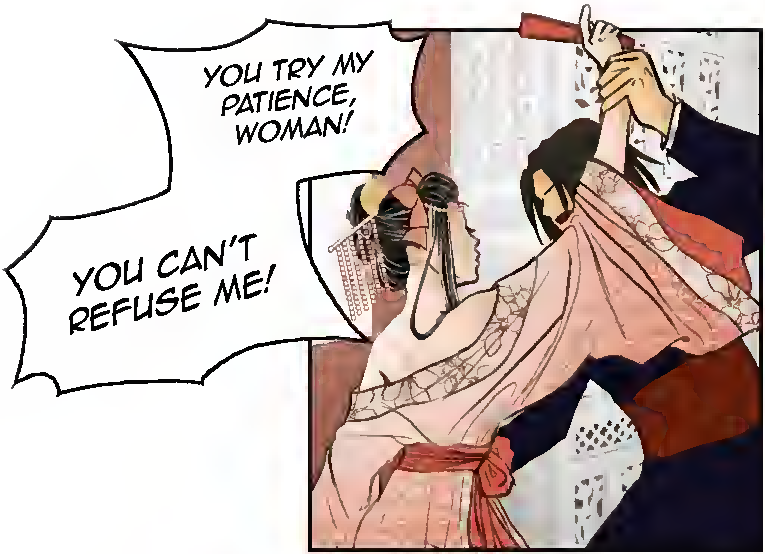
I REALIZE HE THINKS I'M A COURTESAN ...

...SO... WHAT DO YOU SAY, BEAUTIFUL? WE HAVE A DEAL?

...BUT I MAY RIP HIS HAND OFF IF HE DOESN'T MOVE IT.

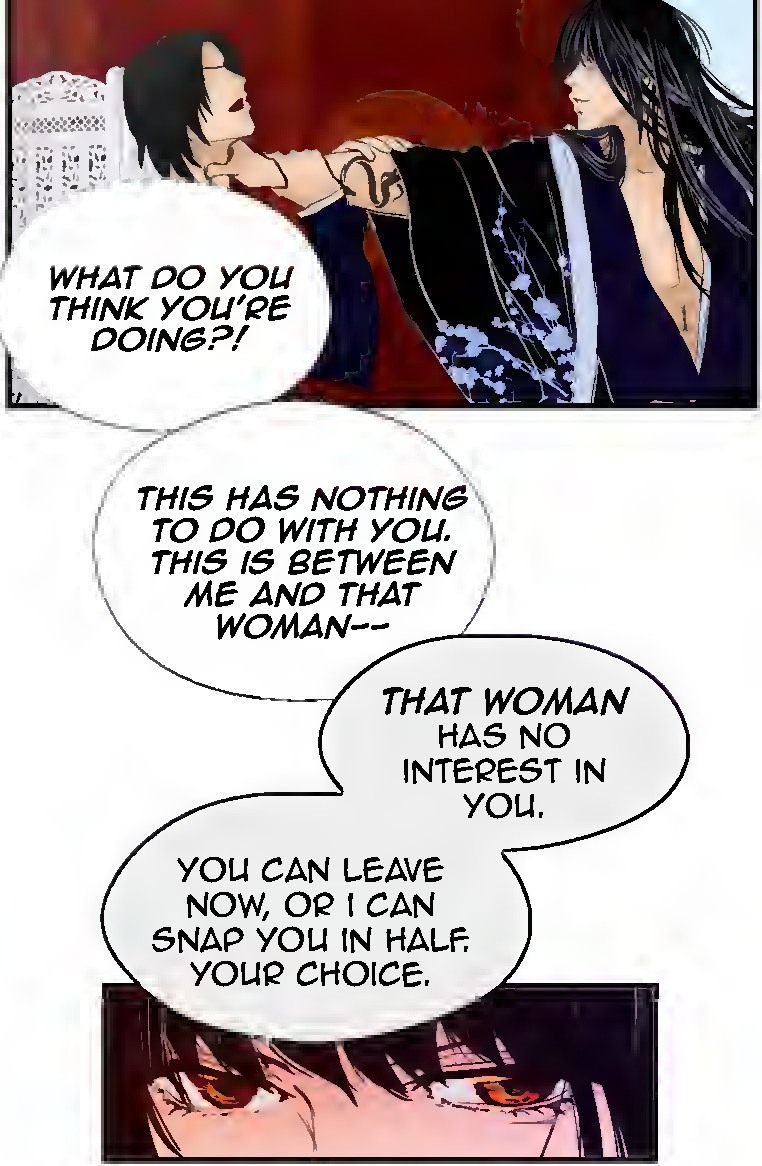
DON'T TOUCH ME.

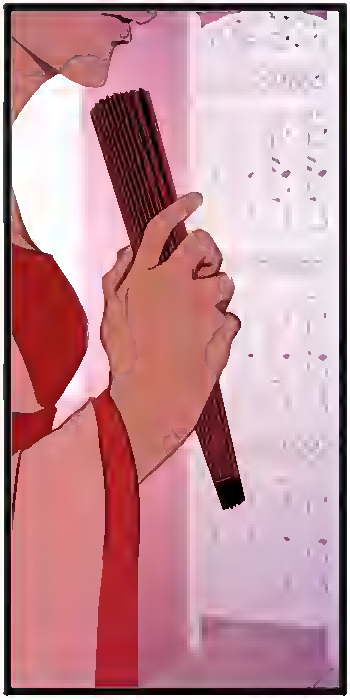
HOW
DARE
YOU.


YOU TRY MY PATIENCE, WOMAN!
YOU CAN'T REFUSE ME!

DO WE HAVE A PROBLEM HERE?

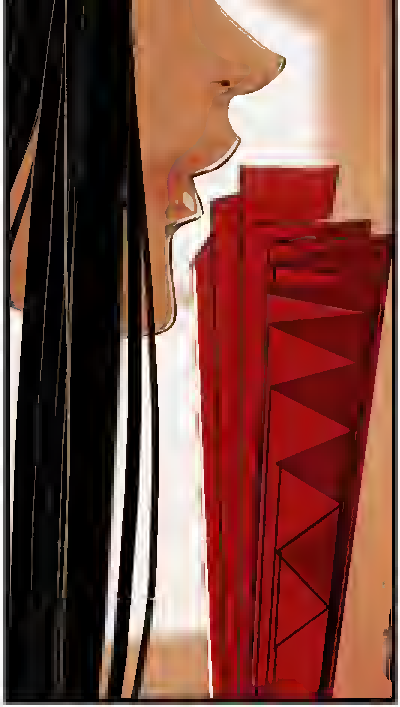
I'D SUGGEST YOU KEEP YOUR HANDS OFF THE LADY.


WHAT DO YOU THINK YOU'RE DOING?!
THIS HAS NOTHING TO DO WITH YOU. THIS IS BETWEEN ME AND THAT WOMAN--
THAT WOMAN HAS NO INTEREST IN YOU.
YOU CAN LEAVE NOW, OR I CAN SNAP YOU IN HALF. YOUR CHOICE.



HE HAS A

SNAKE TATTOO ON HIS ARM.

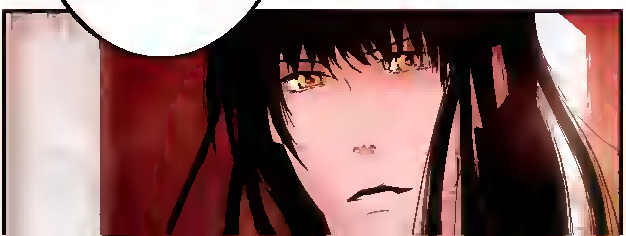


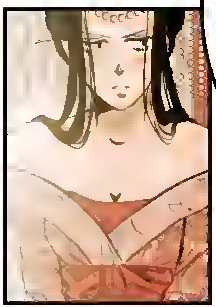
NO DOUBT ABOUT IT.

HE'S THE ONE, BUT I WISH HE WASN'T.

WHATEVER. SHE'S NOT EVEN WORTH IT.

ARE YOU ALRIGHT, MISS?



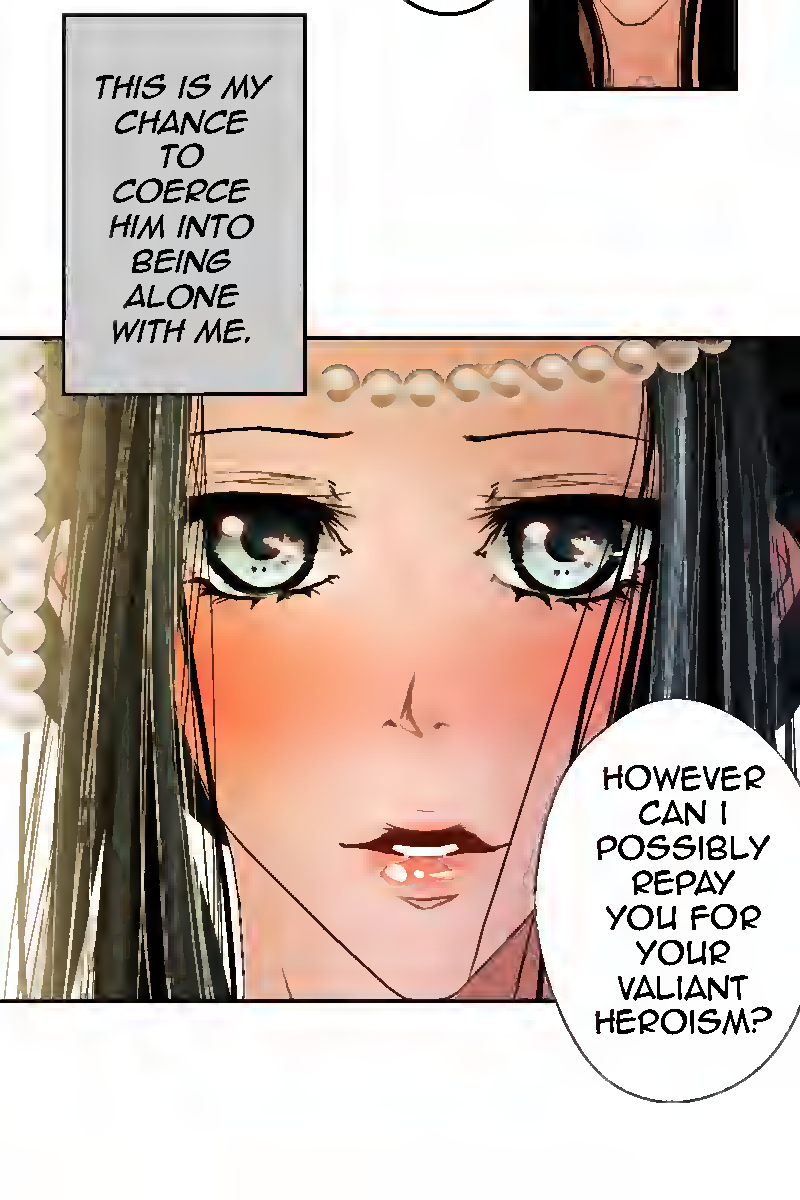


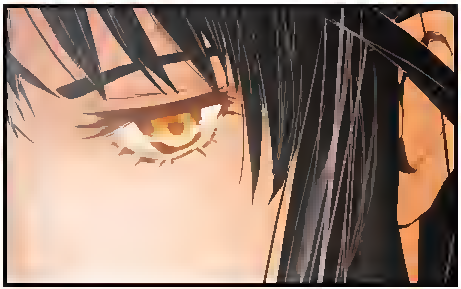
...YES. THANK YOU, SIR.

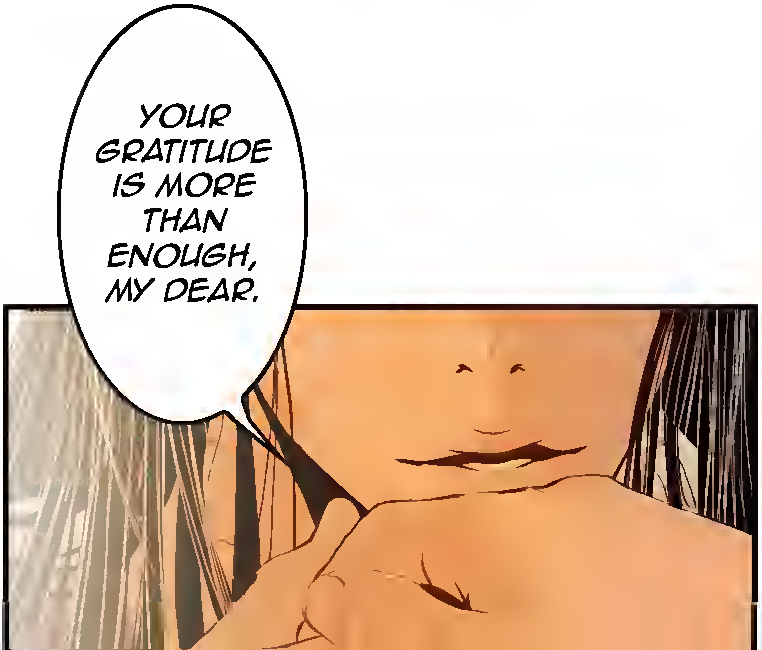
LOOK AT HIM.

TRYING TO ACT LIKE HE'S NO WORSE THAN THE MAN HE JUST THREW OUT.

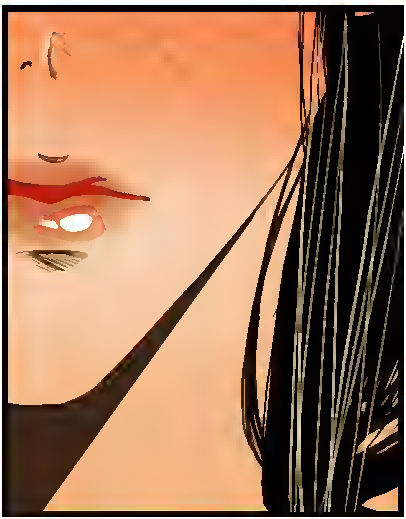
I'M GLAD YOU'RE OK.


THIS IS MY CHANCE TO COERCE HIM INTO BEING ALONE WITH ME.
HOWEVER CAN I POSSIBLY REPAY YOU FOR YOUR VALIANT HEROISM?

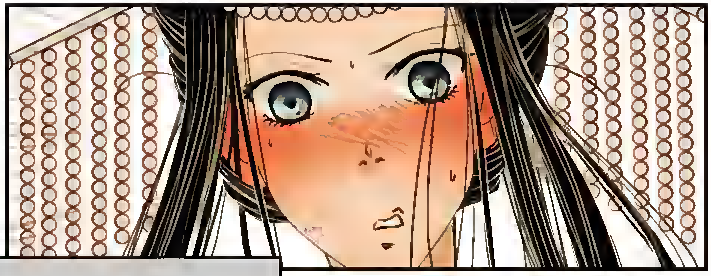



YOUR GRATITUDE IS MORE THAN ENOUGH, MY DEAR.

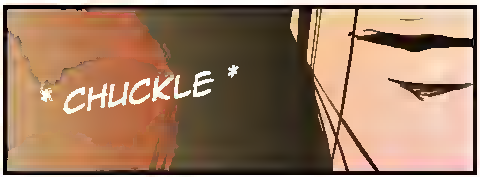
...
HOWEVER
...



...IF YOU WOULD BE SO INCLINED...
I'D LOVE TO JOIN YOU IN YOUR SUITE TO KNOW YOU BETTER.



HE REALLY ASKED!?!!



I KNEW IT. HE'S NO DIFFERENT

THAN ANY OF THESE PROWLING MEN IN HERE.

I'LL TAKE YOU TO THE SUITE.

HE WON'T BE SO CONFIDENT WHEN I TURN THE TABLES ON HIM.

THANK YOU,

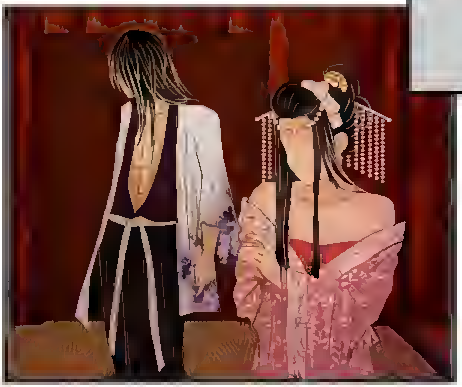
M'LORD.

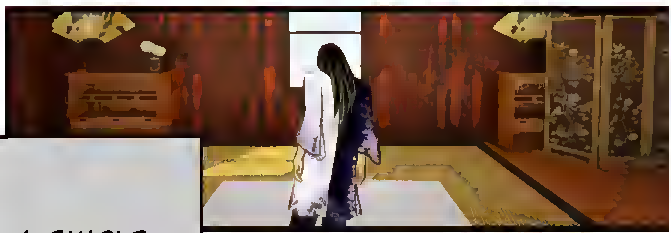
AFTER YOU, MY DEAR.

I JUST NEED

I JUST NEED TO FIND OUT WHERE HE'S BEEN TAKING THE WOMEN.

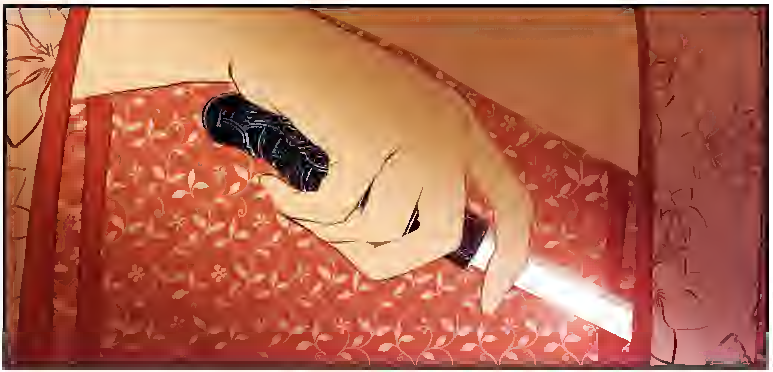
...AND WHAT HE'S DONE TO THEM.



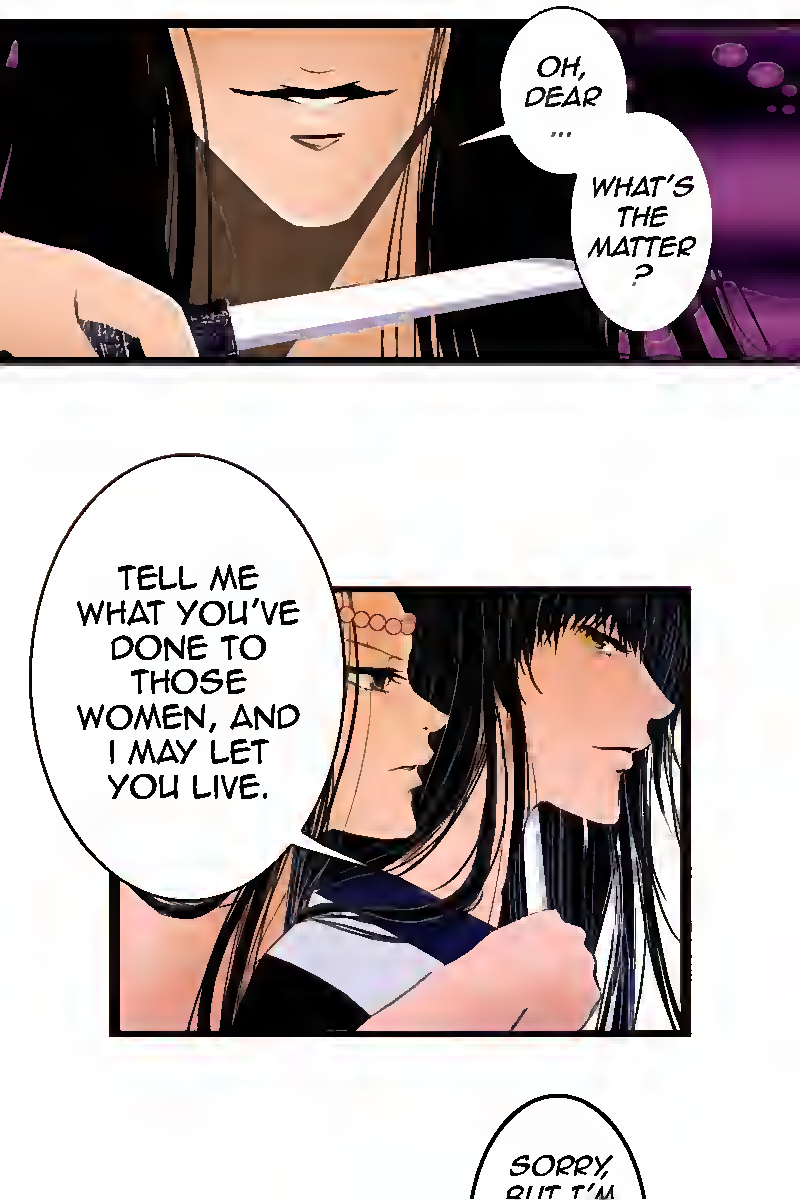


A SIMPLE

THREAT SHOULD BE ENOUGH TO GET THE INFORMATION I NEED.

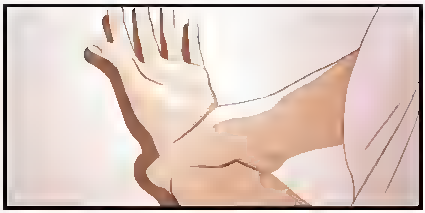


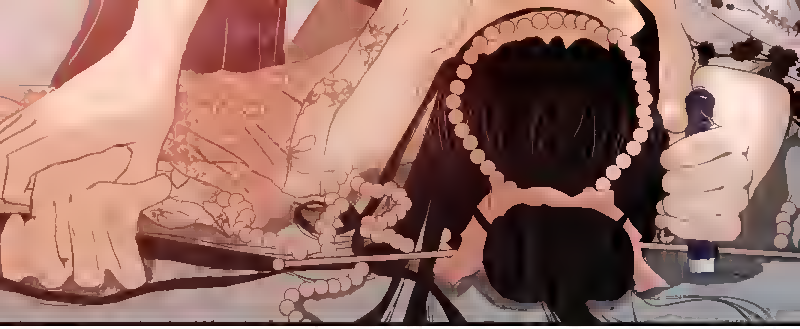
I'LL NEED TO BE QUICK.


OH, DEAR ...
WHAT'S THE MATTER?
TELL ME WHAT YOU'VE DONE TO THOSE WOMEN, AND I MAY LET YOU LIVE.
SORRY,

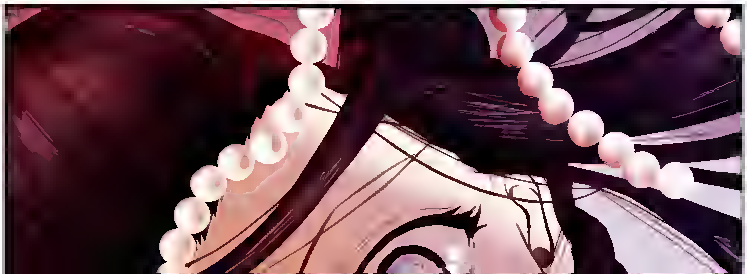
NOT ONE TO KISS AND TELL.

AND, THOUGH YOU ARE CUTE, THIS ISN'T MY IDEA OF FOREPLAY.





* CHUCKLE *



I DON'T THINK YOU WANT TO PLAY THIS GAME, DEAR.

@LIFELIGHTCOMICS

@LIFELIGHT_COMICS